

**U.S. Department of Justice**

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**NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
THURSDAY, APRIL 10, 2003**

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**Norfolk, Virginia** – Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced that Raymond Antonio Edwards, a/k/a “Ramon,” age 46, of St. Ann, Jamaica, was sentenced on April 8, 2003, by United States District Judge Henry Coke Morgan, to 3 12 months in prison for his participation in a cocaine and crack cocaine conspiracy which operated in the Peninsula area of Tidewater and elsewhere, from 1997 through December 29, 2002. On December 29, 2002, federal agents seized approximately 12 kilograms of cocaine from a vehicle which Edwards had transported from Florida to a residence in Hampton, Virginia.

On January 14, 2003, Edwards waived indictment by a grand jury and pleaded guilty to a criminal information which charged him with conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute and to distribute 5 kilograms or more of cocaine and 50 grams or more of cocaine base. As a part of the plea agreement, Edwards, an illegal alien, agreed not to challenge any deportation proceedings after the completion of his sentence.

During the course of the conspiracy, Edwards drove vehicles from Florida to locations in Newport News and Hampton, transporting multiple kilogram quantities of cocaine hidden in various secret compartments. From these houses in the Peninsula, Edwards distributed the cocaine to numerous individuals to be manufactured into cocaine base or crack and then sold as crack to others. Edwards also directed others to rent residences for him, to obtain a car to transport the drugs, and to deliver multiple kilogram quantities of cocaine from Florida to the Eastern District of Virginia.

In a related case, federal agents seized \$306,639 United States Currency; 3 automobiles used

to transport cocaine from Florida to the Tidewater area; men's and women's jewelry; and 2 1/2 kilograms of cocaine and crack cocaine from the Newport News home of Brenton Shand, a co-conspirator of Edwards. Shand was sentenced to 168 months imprisonment.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Newport News Police Department, and the Virginia State Police participated in the investigation. Assistant United States Attorney Janet Reincke handled the prosecution for the United States.

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